



Elimination of Meaford Public Library Overdue Fines

April 27, 2021

Effective immediately, the Meaford Public Library Board has approved the removal of late fines accrued from borrowed items returned after the due date. Public libraries aim to provide equitable and accessible service, and the Meaford Public Library has taken a monumental step in advancing that goal.

The Meaford Public Library Board states that “fines are punitive and stand in the way of libraries core values of providing equitable library service.”

A study by the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries states five benefits of eliminating library fines:

1. Libraries and staff can provide better service to patrons.
2. Being fine-free is more aligned with the real mission of the library. Library overdue fines pose a significant barrier to library use for many vulnerable populations who may not use the library for fear of incurring debt.
3. Libraries are seeing an increase in item returns.
4. Libraries can use their resources better.
5. Eliminating fines can lead to a renewed appreciation for the library.

All late fines currently on members' accounts will be waived. However, the Library will still be charging members for lost or damaged items, items not returned after 60 days, and overdue interlibrary loans. We encourage patrons to return items by their due dates to ensure responsible borrowing and to promote consideration in sharing your community resource. The Meaford Public Library Board is waiving fines, not the due dates.

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